

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1. - 2. (Canceled).

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system having fuel cells, which receive a supply of a gas and generate electric power to satisfy a load, and a secondary battery, which accumulates electric power therein and outputs the accumulated electric power to satisfy the load, said fuel cells system supplying at least one of the electric power generated by the fuel cells and the electric power output from the secondary battery to a load, said fuel cells system comprising:

a gas flow rate-relating quantity measurement unit configured to measure a gas flow rate-relating quantity, which relates to a flow rate of the gas supplied to said fuel cells; and

a control unit configured to specify a working point associated with an output electric current-output voltage characteristic of said fuel cells corresponding to the measured gas flow rate-relating quantity, to determine a first amount of electric power to be taken out of said fuel cells, ~~which is required to activate said fuel cells~~ at the specified working point, to determine a second amount of electric power to be supplied to the load, ~~and to compare said first and second determined amounts of electric power, and to regulate at least one of the~~ electric power to be output from the secondary battery and the electric power to be accumulated in said secondary battery, based on the comparison of the first and second determined amounts of electric power.

Claim 4. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 3, further comprising:

a state of charge sensor configured to measure a state of charge of said secondary battery,

wherein said control unit regulates at least one of the electric power to be output from said secondary battery and the electric power to be accumulated in said secondary battery, based on the measured state of charge in addition to the first and second determined amounts of electric power.

Claim 5. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 3, wherein said control unit specifies a point of highest energy conversion efficiency on the output electric current-output voltage characteristic as the specified working point.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 4, wherein said control unit specifies a point of highest energy conversion efficiency on the output electric current-output voltage characteristic as the specified working point.

Claims 7. - 15. (Canceled)

Claim 16. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system having fuel cells, which receive a supply of a gas and generate electric power to satisfy a load, and a secondary battery, which accumulates electric power therein and outputs the accumulated electric power to satisfy the load, said fuel cells system supplying at least one of the electric power generated by the fuel cells and the electric power output from the secondary battery to a load, said fuel cells system comprising:

means for measuring a gas flow rate-relating quantity which relates to a flow rate of the gas supplied to said fuel cells; and

means for specifying a working point associated with an output electric current-output voltage characteristic of said fuel cells corresponding to the measured gas flow rate-relating quantity,

means for determining a first amount of electric power to be taken out of said fuel cells, ~~which is required to activate said fuel cells~~ at the specified working point,

means for determining a second amount of electric power to be supplied to the load,

means for comparing said first and second determined amounts of electric power; and

means for regulating at least one of the electric power to be output from the secondary battery and the electric power to be accumulated in said secondary battery, based on the comparison of the first and second determined amounts of electric power.

Claim 17. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 16, further comprising:

means for measuring a state of charge of said secondary battery,

wherein said means for specifying regulates at least one of the electric power to be output from said secondary battery and the electric power to be accumulated in said secondary battery, based on the measured state of charge in addition to the first and second determined amounts of electric power.

Claim 18. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 16, wherein said means for specifying specifies a point of highest energy conversion efficiency on the output electric current-output voltage characteristic as the specified working point.

Claim 19. (Previously Presented) A fuel cell system in accordance with claim 17, wherein said means for specifying specifies a point of highest energy conversion efficiency on the output electric current-output voltage characteristic as the specified working point.

Claim 20. (Canceled)